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1962/01/18

INCOMING TELEGRAM *Department of State*

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Control: 10545
Rec'd: January 18, 196
10:30 p.m.

FROM: GENEVA

TO: Secretary of State

NO: CONFE 1055, JANUARY 18, 8 PM

PRIORITY

ACTION DEPARTMENT CONFE 1055, INFORMATION BANGKOK PRIORITY 386, LONDON PRIORITY 587, MOSCOW PRIORITY 156, NEW DELHI PRIORITY 346, OTTAWA PRIORITY 276, PARIS PRIORITY 617, SAIGON PRIORITY 360, VIENTIANE PRIORITY 594.

REFERENCE: CONFE 1052

BROWN TOLD PHOUMI AND BOUN OUM MORNING JAN 16: (A) PRESIDENT WISHED PEACEFUL SOLUTION LAO PROBLEM, (B) ONLY WAY THIS POSSIBLE WAS THROUGH COALITION GOVT UNDER SOUVANNA, (C) ONLY WAY GET SUCH GOVT WAS DENY DEFENSE AND INTERIOR TO BOTH EXTREMES, (D) PHOUMI AND COLLEAGUES HAD USEFUL ROLE TO PLAY IN SUCH GOVT, (E) HE SHOULD REVISE HIS POSITION ON DEFENSE AND INTERIOR AND GET ON WITH NEGOTIATIONS, WHICH BY HIS OWN ADMISSION SHOULD BE RELATIVELY EASY ONCE THIS KEY QUESTION SETTLED, (F) WHETHER DEFENSE AND INTERIOR WENT TO VTIANE NEUTRALS OR SOUVANNA NEUTRALS COULD BE NEGOTIATED.

PHOUMI SAID HIS POSITION ON THE KEY PORTFOLIOS WAS UNCHANGED.

BROWN THEN ASKED PHOUMI WHETHER HE HAD FULLY CONSIDERED CONSEQUENCES TO PEOPLE OF LAOS IF US UNABLE CONTINUE ITS SUPPORT. HIS AIRPLANES COULD NOT REMAIN IN THE AIR, HIS TROOPS COULD NOT BE FED OR SUPPLIED. IT WOULD BE VERY HARD ON COUNTRY.

PHOUMI SAID BROWN SHOULD NOT THREATEN. IF WE HAD DIFFERENCE OF OPINION WE SHOULD DISCUSS IT. ONE SHOULD NEVER THREATEN AN ASIAN. HE REALIZED THAT WITHOUT US AID LAOS WAS DEAD. IF WE WANTED

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-2-CONFE 1055, JANUARY 18, 8 PM, FROM GENEVA

WE WANTED TO STOP AID, THAT WAS OUR PRIVILEGE. WE SHOULD JUST DO IT AND NOT THREATEN IT. BROWN REPLIED HE WAS NOT THREATENING BUT SIMPLY MAKING SURE THAT EVERYONE FULLY UNDERSTOOD CONSEQUENCES OF DECISIONS THAT MIGHT BE MADE .

BROWN THEN TURNED TO BOUN OUM AND MADE WARM PLEA TO HIM TO CONSIDER HIS HEAVY RESPONSIBILITIES TO HIS PEOPLE AND NOT TO CAST AWAY STRUCTURE OF INTERNATIONAL GUARANTEES NOW AVAILABLE TO HIS COUNTRY NOR TO DENY IT US SUPPORT. HE MUST SEIZE OPPORTUNITY OF PRESENCE THREE PRINCES IN GENEVA TO AGREE ON GOVT. IT WAS ALMOST UNANIMOUS OPINION ALL CONCERNED THAT DEFENSE AND INTERIOR SHOULD GO TO CENTER. HE WAS COMPLETELY ISOLATED IN TERMS WORLD OPINION. PHOUMI THEN SAID THIS VERY DIFFICULT DECISION. HE CONTENDED US HAD NEVER BEFORE MADE ITS POSITIONS CLEAR ON THESE TWO POSTS. (BROWN REMINDED HIM OF PREVIOUS CONVERSATIONS). HE SAID HE MUST HAVE TIME TO THINK.

AT THREE O'CLOCK I CALLED ON BOUN OUM. PHOUMI WAS PRESENT. I ADDRESSED MYSELF WHOLLY TO BOUN OUM. I STRESSED FACT THAT EVERYONE NOW WAITING FOR FORMATION GOVT. THIS NOT PURELY INTERNAL QUESTION AS HE CLAIMED. FORMATION GOVT WAS KEY TO SETTLING CIVIL WAR WHICH INVOLVED INTERNATIONAL ELEMENTS. HE RULED ONLY HALF COUNTRY. WORLD WAS WAITING FOR NEGOTIATIONS IN GOOD FAITH. I WAS DISAPPOINTED THAT SEVERAL ~~DAYS HAD PASSED~~ WITHOUT PRINCES EVEN MEETING. OFFICIALLY AND AS FRIEND OF LAOS, I URGED HIM MOST EARNESTLY GET ON WITH SERIOUS DISCUSSION, AND IF HE HAD TO GO TO FUNERAL, LEAVE PHOUMI TO CONTINUE ON HIS BEHALF. WE HAD HELPED LAOS, BUT OUR AID HAD BEEN GIVEN TO LAOS AND NOT TO PHOUMI OR ANY OTHER INDIVIDUAL. NOW WAS TIME TO CAST ASIDE ALL PERSONAL CONSIDERATIONS. PHOUMI INTERJECTED THAT HE WOULD STAY IF BUSINESS NOT FINISHED THIS AFTERNOON. HE SAID HE WOULD DO HIS BEST TO ARRANGE MATTERS TO SATISFACTION OF ALL CONCERNED.

I URGED BOUN OUM AGAIN CONSIDER HIS RESPONSIBILITIES AND NEGOTIATE SINCERELY.

/ PHOUMI

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PHOUMI REPLIED THAT THERE WOULD BE MEETING WITH CO-CHAIRMEN AT FOUR AND MEETING ALSO IN EVENING. HE THOUGHT QUOTE SOMETHING WOULD COME OF THIS UNQUOTE. (THIS WAS FIRST HINT OF ANY GIVE IN RIGIDITY OF POSITION.)

I THEN ADDRESSED PHOUMI FOR FIRST TIME AND SAID WITH EMPHASIS "YOU ARE A LAO FOR WHOM WE HAVE GREAT RESPECT. WE HOPE THAT YOU, YOURSELF, HAVE A GOOD FUTURE AS WELL AS YOUR COUNTRY." HE WAS OBVIOUSLY RELIEVED AND GRATIFIED BY THIS EXPRESSION.

MARTIN

COT

DECLAS

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